

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION
For
General Counsel Legal Services

RFQ Issued: January 14, 2026

RFQ Submission Deadline: February 27, 2026

Issued by

Kings River Conservation District

4886 E. Jensen Ave,

Fresno, California 93725

Telephone 559-237-5567

www.krcd.org



1. Introduction

The Kings River Conservation District (KRCDD) is soliciting qualifications from experienced law firms and attorneys to provide **General Counsel Legal Services** with a minimum of 7 years of experience representing public agencies. The selected firm or attorney will serve at the pleasure of the Board of Directors as their legal advisor, in addition to executive leadership and staff on a broad range of legal matters relevant to the District's operations, programs, and statutory responsibilities.

This RFQ outlines the scope of services, minimum qualifications, submittal requirements, and evaluation criteria.

2. Background

The KRCDD, established in 1951 through a special act of California legislature, is a public agency serving approximately 1.2 million rural acres within portions of Fresno, Kings, and Tulare counties. Our responsibilities include resource management, flood control, energy services, and collaborative environmental stewardship. KRCDD is governed by a board of seven elected Directors, each serving a 4-year term and supported by a professional management team. For additional information please visit: www.krcdd.org

3. Scope of Services

The General Counsel will be expected to provide ongoing legal services including, but not limited to:

A. Governance & Board Support

- Provide legal guidance to the Board of Directors, its committees, and executive staff.
- Attend Board meetings and other meetings as requested.
- Advise on compliance with the Brown Act, Public Records Act, and conflict-of-interest statutes.
- Provide legal support for contractual administrative services KRCDD provides to the following organizations: Kings River Water Quality Coalition, Kings Water Alliance, and Kings Basin Water Authority.
- KRCDD is party to the Kings River Fisheries Management Program, a Framework Agreement developed in partnership with the Kings River Water Association and the California Department of Fish & Wildlife in 1999. Provide legal support as needed for this program.

B. General Legal Support

- Interpret federal, state, and local laws affecting KRCDD operations.
- Draft, review, and negotiate contracts, MOUs, agreements, and legal documents.

- Provide legal opinions, guidance, and memoranda.
- Real estate law, easements, rights-of-way, encroachment permits, and other related agreements and negotiations.
- Provide guidance with elections requirements.
- Provide guidance on broad financial matters, including bonding.

C. Regulatory & Policy Compliance

- Advise on water law, environmental regulations, public agency law, employment law, land use, CEQA/NEPA, and other relevant areas.
- Provide AB 1234 compliance training or other training as required.
- Assist with the development and interpretation of policies and procedures.

D. Litigation Management

- Represent the District in administrative, civil, or regulatory proceedings, or coordinate with specialized outside counsel as needed.

E. Additional Services

- Any other legal services customarily provided by public agency general counsel.
- To collaborate with existing special counsel providing services to KRCD.

4. Minimum Qualifications

Respondents must demonstrate:

- Admitted to practice in the State of California and be members in good standing with the State Bar of California.
- Extensive experience providing legal services to public agencies, special districts, municipalities, or similar entities.
- Knowledge of California water law, public agency law, and laws governing special districts.
- Strong communication skills and the capacity to provide timely, responsive legal support.
- No conflicts of interest that would limit representation of KRCD.

5. Submittal Requirements

Interested firms or individuals must provide the following:

1. Cover Letter

- Introduce the firm/attorney, primary contact, and interest in providing services.

2. Firm/Attorney Profile

- Overview of the firm, size, years in practice, longevity of partners and associates (inclusive of departures in the past 3 years), and relevant areas of expertise.

3. Qualifications & Experience

- Demonstrated experience with public agencies or special districts.
- Descriptions of comparable clients or engagements.

4. Key Personnel

- Identify lead counsel and any supporting positions, specifying roles and availability.

5. Approach to Scope of Services

- Explanation of how services will be provided, communication methods, and responsiveness standards.

6. Fee Structure

- Hourly rates, retainer options, and any alternative fee arrangements.

7. References

- At least three references from public agency clients.

8. Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

9. Proposed Form of Legal Services Agreement

6. Submittal Instructions

Responses must be submitted electronically in PDF format no later than February 27, 2026, by 5:00 p.m. to:

David Merritt, General Manager

dmerritt@krcd.org

4886 E. Jensen Ave. Fresno, CA 93725

1-559-237-5567

7. Evaluation and Selection Process

KRCD will evaluate responses based on the following criteria:

- Relevant experience and qualifications
- Knowledge of applicable laws and public agency governance
- Quality of proposed approach
- Experience of assigned personnel
- Fee structure and value
- References and past performance
- Potential conflicts of interest

KRCD may invite selected respondents for interviews. The Board of Directors will make the final selection.

8. General Conditions

- KRCD reserves the right to accept or reject any or all submissions or to waive any irregularities;
- To negotiate a final contract with any respondent in the best interest of KRCD; and
- To amend this RFQ.
- This RFQ does not commit KRCD to award a contract or pay any costs incurred in responding.